

Message Text

SECRET

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44

ACTION NEA-10

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, EG

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH ALSYG MAHMOUD RIAD

1. IN CALL ON ARAB LEAGUE SEC GEN MAHMOUD
RIAD YESTERDAY, HE MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) AFTER A LONG RECITAL ABOUT HIS INVOLVEMENT
IN ARAB-ISRAELI PROBLEM SINCE ITS INCEPTION
AND IN DRAFTING OF UN RESOLUTION 242, HE
SAID HE HAD TOLD PALESTINIANS AND SYRIANS
THAT THEY SHOULD NOT TRY TO AMEND 242. HE
HAD ARGUED HIS CASE ON TECHNICAL GROUND
THAT AMENDMENT OF A PAST RESOLUTION IS NOT
POSSIBLE UNDER UN PROCEDURES. ALL THEY COULD
HOPE TO DO WAS OBTAIN A RESOLUTION WHICH
SUPPLEMENTS PAST ONES. SYRIANS AND PALESTINIANS
HAD BEEN SHORT-SIGHTED IN THEIR RECENT EFFORTS
AT UNSC. WITHOUT ANY BITTERNESS, HE OBSERVED
THAT IT HAD BEEN FOREGONE CONCLUSION THAT USG WOULD
VETO.

(B) WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING SINCERITY OF
SECRETARIES RUSK AND ROGERS, THEY HAD BEEN STYMIED
BY PRO-ISRAELI DOMESTIC PRESSURES IN THE US.
SECRETARY KISSINGER HAS MANAGED TO BREAK OUT OF
THESE CONSTRAINTS, AND RIAD COULD ONLY HOPE
THAT THE SECY WILL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE HIS
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EFFORTS. ALTHOUGH PROGRESS MADE THUS FAR HAS, IN

RIAD'S VIEW, BEEN SMALL, IT IS THE FIRST TIME ANY
SUCH PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN 25 YEARS.

(C) PALESTINIAN REPS WHO RETURNED FROM US
HAD TOLD HIM THEY SENSED SHIFT IN ATTITUDE IN US
ABOUT PLO. THIS HAD BEEN NOTICEABLE IN NEWSPAPER
ARTICLES, COMMENTS IN UN CORRIDORS, DEPT'S
JAN 26 STATEMENT AND IN OTHER WAYS. ACCORDING RIAD,
THEY WERE ENCOURAGED THAT THIS MIGHT MARK THE
BEGINNING OF A NEW TREND. AMB TOLD RIAD IT WAS
REGRETTABLE THAT THE PALESTINIAN REPS HAD REFUSED
TO ACCEPT LANGUAGE RECOGNIZING THE RIGHT OF ALL
STATES TO LIVE IN PEACE AND SECURE BOUNDARIES. THEIR
PERSISTENT FAILURE TO DO SO INCREASES DIFFICULTY
OF FINDING A SOLUTION TO THE COMPLEX PALESTINIAN
ISSUE. THIS POINT OUGHT TO BE BROUGHT HOME TO THE
PALESTINIANS.

(D) IN LEBANON, THERE IS STILL NO MORE THAN A
CEASEFIRE AND SITUATION THERE REMAINS DICEY.
RECENT ISOLATED KILLINGS COULD TRIGGER OFF NEW
MASSIVE OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES. SYRIAN ROLE WAS
CONSTRUCTIVE EVEN THOUGH GOE IS UNHAPPY ABOUT IT.

2. ASKED ABOUT USG POSITION ON LEBANON, AMB TOLD
RIAD WE HAVE MADE IT KNOWN TO LEBANESE THAT (A) THEY
SHOULD NOT EXPECT ANY USG INTERVENTION SUCH AS TOOK
PLACE IN 1958; (B) WE OPPOSE PARTITION; (C) POLITICAL
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHANGES ARE NECESSARY IN LEBANON
AND (D) WE HAD URGED THAT KARAMI REMAIN IN OFFICE.
WE HAD ALSO URGED SYRIANS AND ISRAELIS TO SHOW
RESTRAINT. RIAD SAID HE WAS GLAD TO HEAR USG
POSITION. HE HAD BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT REPORTS,
LARGELY EMANATING FROM LEBANESE AND ESPECIALLY
RAYMOND EDDE, THAT USG FAVORS PARTITION AND WAS
AGAIN CONSIDERING MILITARY INTERVENTION. AMB TOLD
HIM THERE IS NO TRUTH TO ANY SUCH REPORTS. RIAD
SEEMED RELIEVED.

3. COMMENT: MAHMOUD RIAD HAS RECORD OF BEING
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A SHARP CRITIC OF USG POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST.
AS NOTED ABOVE, HIS COMMENTS ON THIS OCCASION WERE
RESTRAINED. WHILE EMBASSY HAS CONTACT WITH
ARAB LEAGUE, WE HAVE NOT MADE ANY SPECIAL EFFORT
TO KEEP SYG RIAD INFORMED. HIS RELATIONS WITH
GOE ARE NOT SUCH THAT LATTER ENCOURAGES IT. SINCE
RIAD RECENTLY LET IT BE KNOWN THAT HE WOULD LIKE
AMB TO COME BY FOR A TALK, CALL WAS MADE. AT

CONCLUSION, RIAD INDICATED HE WOULD WELCOME
CONTINUING SUCH EXCHANGES.
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